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Reconstructing Islamic Humanism for Ethical Governance of the Digital Public Sphere: A Normative-Conceptual Analysis

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Abstract

The expansion of the digital public sphere has intensified ethical challenges such as polarization, incivility, performative religiosity, and the erosion of moral accountability in online communication. Existing studies on Islam and digital media largely remain descriptive, focusing on patterns of online religious expression, identity construction, or authority contestation, while leaving under-theorized the normative ethical criteria by which digital discourse itself can be evaluated and guided. Unlike dominant approaches that treat Islam primarily as a sociocultural variable within digital environments, this study advances Islamic humanism as a normative ethical theory capable of critically assessing and reshaping the moral quality of digital public discourse. This study aims to address this gap by conceptualizing Islamic humanism as a normative framework for ethical engagement in the digital public sphere. Drawing on classical Islamic moral philosophy, particularly the principles of adab (civility), rahmah (compassion), and ʿadl (justice), the research examines how Islamic ethical values can inform digital discourse, communication practices, and identity formation. The study employs a qualitative, interpretive, and hermeneutic methodology, integrating conceptual analysis with critical readings of contemporary digital discourse. The findings reveal that Islamic humanism provides a triadic ethical grammar capable of countering dehumanizing tendencies in digital environments by restoring moral balance, empathy, and justice in online interaction. The analysis also identifies structural tensions between spiritual sincerity and algorithm-driven performance, highlighting the need to integrate ethical consciousness with technological literacy. This study proposes a model of digital Islamic humanism that unites ethical, discursive, and identity dimensions. The findings contribute theoretically to digital ethics by introducing an Islamic humanist normative paradigm and offer practical implications for fostering humane, responsible, and spiritually grounded digital citizenship in pluralistic public spheres.

Keywords: Islamic Humanism, Normative Ethics, Muslim Digital Discourse, Digital Civility

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Introduction

The digital revolution has fundamentally reshaped the ways human beings communicate, deliberate, and construct meaning in contemporary society (Floridi, 2014; Coleman, 2020; Yu & Jiang, 2024). In the twenty-first century, the digital public sphere has emerged as a central arena for civic participation, moral negotiation, and identity expression. This sphere encompasses interconnected social media platforms, online forums, and digitally networked communities that enable individuals to engage in public discourse beyond the control of traditional institutional gatekeepers (Min, 2020; Davis, 2021; Fuchs, 2022). Within these environments, individuals are no longer passive recipients of information but active producers, interpreters, and contesters of meaning in real time.

At the same time, the expansion of the digital public sphere has generated profound ethical and epistemic challenges. Contemporary digital communication is increasingly characterized by the rapid circulation of misinformation, heightened ideological polarization, affective intensification, and the gradual erosion of civility in public discourse. Algorithmic systems that prioritize engagement, visibility, and virality frequently amplify outrage and spectacle rather than reflective dialogue or reasoned deliberation (Marin & Roeser, 2020; Birchall & Coleman, 2023). As a result, public communication often shifts away from deliberative exchange toward antagonism, fragmentation, and moral exhaustion.

For Muslim communities across diverse cultural and political contexts, these developments raise urgent normative questions regarding how Islamic ethical principles can guide responsible and meaningful engagement in digital public life (Firnando, 2024; Alhaji Rabiu et al., 2025). Digital platforms have become significant spaces for religious expression, daʿwah, political contestation, and identity formation, yet they are also environments in which moral accountability is diffused, anonymity is normalized, and performative religiosity is structurally incentivized. The unresolved tension between faith-based moral commitments and the logic of algorithmic modernity thus constitutes the central problem addressed in this study.

Islamic humanism offers a compelling moral perspective for responding to these challenges. As a worldview that integrates faith, rational inquiry, and compassion, Islamic humanism draws upon classical Islamic philosophy and ethical traditions to affirm the inherent dignity of the human person, or karāmah insāniyyah (Ahmed, 2023; Abbas & Hassan, 2023; Jaffer, 2021). This dignity is grounded in the Qurʾānic understanding of humanity as God's vicegerent, or khalīfah, entrusted with moral agency and responsibility toward both society and creation (Rafiee, 2024). Central to Islamic humanism are ethical principles such as tawḥīd, ʿadl, raḥmah, and adab, which historically shaped an intellectual and moral civilization that harmonized spiritual consciousness with rational and ethical inquiry (Ahmed, 2023).

In the context of contemporary digital modernity, however, these ethical principles cannot be applied mechanically or preserved as static norms. Human interaction is increasingly mediated by algorithms, attention economies, and technologically induced anonymity, which reshape how individuals perceive themselves and others. Communication is often detached from face-to-face accountability, while moral responsibility becomes distributed across complex digital networks. Under such conditions, Islamic ethical values require reinterpretation so that they can function as a normative framework capable of engaging the realities of digitally mediated public life (Hefner, 2023; Situmorang, 2025). The challenge, therefore, lies not in defending Islamic ethics as timeless abstractions, but in rearticulating Islamic humanism as a living moral paradigm responsive to the ethical disruptions of the digital public sphere.

Despite the growing scholarly interest in Islam and digital media, much of the existing literature remains predominantly descriptive rather than normative. Numerous studies have examined how Muslims use social media for religious outreach, political activism, identity construction, and community building (Eickelman & Anderson, 2003; Campbell & La Pastina, 2010; Almdni, 2021; Kamal, 2022; Mohiuddin, 2023; Sirait, 2024). While these studies provide valuable empirical insights into patterns of digital engagement, they often stop short of addressing the ethical and philosophical criteria by which digital discourse itself should be evaluated. In many cases, Islam is treated primarily as a sociocultural variable or symbolic resource, rather than as a source of normative ethical reasoning.

Concurrently, dominant debates on digital ethics continue to be shaped largely by secular paradigms rooted in liberal, procedural, or utilitarian traditions (Floridi, 2014; Marin & Roeser, 2020; Vallor, 2021). These approaches tend to prioritize autonomy, harm reduction, or procedural fairness, while marginalizing spiritual accountability, moral intentionality, and transcendent conceptions of human dignity. As a result, non-Western ethical traditions, particularly Islam with its rich humanist heritage, remain under-theorized within global discussions of digital civility and public communication. This combination of descriptive dominance in digital Islam studies and secular bias in digital ethics produces a significant theoretical gap.

This study intervenes at this intersection by advancing Islamic humanism as a normative ethical framework for the digital public sphere. Rather than approaching Islam merely as an object of digital analysis, this research positions Islamic humanism as a moral philosophy capable of providing evaluative criteria for digital discourse, communicative practices, and identity formation. Islamic humanism is thus reconstructed not only as a theological or historical concept, but as a viable ethical foundation for digital citizenship in an era marked by algorithmic fragmentation and moral disorientation.

To address this gap, the study is guided by the following research questions. First, how can Islamic humanism be reconstructed as a normative ethical framework for the digital public sphere. Second, what ethical principles does Islamic humanism offer in response to algorithmic polarization, performative religiosity, and epistemic injustice in digitally mediated public discourse.

Theoretically, this article contributes by theorizing Islamic humanism as a form of normative digital ethics, extending public sphere theory through a non-Western moral paradigm grounded in Islamic moral philosophy, and offering a platform-sensitive ethical framework that aligns adab, raḥmah, and ʿadl with the communicative logics of contemporary social media environments. In doing so, the study responds to broader calls for more pluralistic and ethically grounded approaches to digital public life.

Conceptually, Islamic humanism understands the human being, or al-insān, as intrinsically relational, bearing responsibility to God, to fellow humans, and to the broader creation. This relational

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anthropology stands in contrast to the fragmented digital self, which is increasingly reduced to metrics, data points, and curated representations of identity (Polsky, 2022; Schultz et al., 2025). The commodification of attention and identity within digital environments contributes to what may be described as algorithmic dehumanization, in which communication is stripped of empathy, nuance, and moral accountability. Islamic humanism offers a counter-discourse that recenters ethical reflection, compassion, and responsibility within public communication.

Reimagining Islamic humanism for the digital public sphere involves two interconnected intellectual processes. The first is critical reconstruction, which revisits classical Islamic ethical sources to distill principles relevant to contemporary communicative challenges. The second is contextual translation, through which these principles are applied to digital phenomena such as misinformation, online incivility, anonymity, and identity politics. Within this framework, adab extends beyond etiquette to encompass responsible participation and ethical dialogue, raḥmah manifests as digital empathy that enables engagement across difference without hostility, and ʿadl demands fairness in representation, discourse, and the circulation of knowledge.

Identity formation within the digital public sphere further intensifies these ethical concerns. Digital platforms enable Muslims to articulate diverse interpretations of Islam, yet they also expose individuals and communities to fragmentation, contestation, and misrepresentation (Akmaliah, 2020; Raya, 2025). Competing claims to authenticity and authority frequently generate intra-faith tensions, while external representations continue to shape global perceptions of Islam. Viewed through the lens of Islamic humanism, ethical conduct and authentic humanity become inseparable dimensions of digital life, underscoring the importance of ethical literacy in digitally mediated religious engagement (Mohiuddin, 2023).

Ultimately, this study underscores the urgency of reimagining Islamic humanism as a normative framework for the digital public sphere. As digital technologies continue to reshape communication, identity, and belief systems, ethical reflection must evolve alongside them. By integrating adab, raḥmah, and ʿadl, Islamic humanism offers both a critical response to digital modernity and a constructive vision for a more humane, dialogical, and ethically grounded digital public culture.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, interpretive, and conceptual research design to examine how Islamic humanism can be reconstructed as a normative ethical framework for the digital public sphere (Thorne, 2025). The research is grounded in a constructivist epistemology, which understands ethics, discourse, and identity as socially constructed through historically situated meaning-making processes rather than as fixed or universal givens (Mohajan & Mohajan, 2022). Accordingly, the study does not aim at empirical generalization or representativeness, but at normative-theoretical reconstruction based on purposive textual exemplars that illuminate ethical tensions within digitally mediated public life.

The units of analysis consist of two interrelated bodies of text. The first includes selected classical Islamic ethical and philosophical works, particularly those of Al-Ghazali, Ibn Miskawayh, and Al-Farabi, which are examined to distill foundational concepts of Islamic humanism such as adab, rahmah, and ʿadl. These texts are treated as normative sources that articulate moral anthropology, ethical reasoning, and conceptions of human dignity within the Islamic intellectual tradition. The second body of texts comprises contemporary Muslim digital discourse drawn from publicly accessible social media platforms, including short textual posts, comment threads, and audiovisual religious content circulated on platforms such as Twitter (X), Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok.

The selection of digital materials follows purposive and theoretical sampling criteria rather than statistical representativeness. Texts are selected based on their relevance to ethical issues central to the study, including polarization, online incivility, performative religiosity, and epistemic simplification. The materials analyzed consist of posts, captions, video transcripts, and comment exchanges that explicitly address religious, moral, or socio-political themes and that have generated visible public engagement. The temporal scope of the selected digital texts spans the period from 2020 to 2024, reflecting intensified digital religious activity during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent normalization of digitally mediated religious communication.

Data collection is conducted through close textual reading and documentation of these materials, treating them as discursive artifacts rather than as indicators of behavioral frequency. The study does not claim to represent Muslim digital discourse as a whole; instead, the selected cases function as illustrative exemplars that reveal recurring ethical patterns and tensions within the digital public sphere. This approach is consistent with interpretive qualitative research that prioritizes depth of meaning over breadth of coverage.

Data analysis integrates hermeneutic interpretation with critical discourse analysis. Hermeneutic analysis is employed to reconstruct ethical meanings by situating both classical texts and contemporary digital discourse within their respective moral, theological, and socio-technical contexts. This process involves a dialogical reading between classical Islamic ethical concepts and contemporary communicative practices, allowing ethical principles to be reinterpreted in light of digital conditions. Critical discourse analysis is used to examine how power relations, moral authority, and identity claims are articulated and negotiated within digital texts, particularly in relation to algorithmic visibility, performative piety, and discursive exclusion (Papaioannou, 2023). Rather than focusing on linguistic micro-features alone, CDA in this study operates at a thematic and normative level, identifying patterns of moral reasoning, ethical justification, and discursive framing.

To enhance analytical rigor, the study employs theoretical triangulation between classical Islamic moral philosophy and contemporary communication and digital ethics theory. This triangulation enables the evaluation of digital discourse through both Islamic ethical norms and critical public sphere theory, strengthening the coherence of the proposed normative framework. Reflexivity guides the analytical process, with the researcher explicitly acknowledging their positionality as an interpreter situated within Islamic ethical discourse and contemporary academic debates on digital ethics. This reflexive stance is intended to account for interpretive plurality while maintaining normative clarity.

Overall, this methodological approach is designed to bridge Islamic moral philosophy and communication theory in order to develop a coherent and context-sensitive framework of digital

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Islamic humanism. By combining purposive textual analysis, hermeneutic reconstruction, and critical discourse analysis, the study offers a theoretically grounded and methodologically transparent foundation for examining ethical engagement in the digital public sphere.

Findings and Discussion

This study demonstrates that Islamic humanism constitutes a coherent ethical and philosophical framework capable of rehumanizing the digital public sphere. Its foundational principles of *adab* or civility, *rahmah* or compassion, and *ʿadl* or justice function as normative resources for moral guidance and critical reflection amid rapid technological transformation and ethical disorientation. Contemporary digital environments, shaped by immediacy, anonymity, and competition for visibility, simultaneously enable expression while intensifying moral vulnerability (Markham, 2020; Boczkowski & Mitchelstein, 2021). It is therefore important to clarify that the platform-based patterns discussed in this study are presented as analytical illustrations rather than empirical or statistical representations of Muslim digital behavior. Table 1 does not claim to exhaustively map platform usage or to generalize across Muslim populations; instead, it serves as a form of conceptual mapping that highlights recurrent ethical tensions and normative responses observable in purposively selected digital texts. In this sense, the identified patterns function as heuristic typologies that support normative-theoretical analysis rather than empirical measurement. To illustrate how these ethical dynamics manifest across different communicative environments, Table 1 presents a conceptual mapping of dominant ethical issues, recurring discursive patterns, and corresponding Islamic humanist responses across major social media platforms.

Table 1. Conceptual Mapping of Digital Islamic Humanism in Muslim Digital Discourse

Platform	Dominant Issue	Observed Ethical Pattern	Digital Islamic Humanism Response
Twitter (X)	Political and theological debates	Moral polarization and hostility	Digital adab and justice (ʿadl)
Instagram	Performative piety	Commodification of religiosity	Ikhlas and moral integrity
YouTube	Simplified religious narratives	Epistemic simplification	Epistemic justice (ʿadl epistemic)
TikTok	Viral moral messaging	Empathy driven engagement	Raḥmah and digital empathy

The ethical configurations summarized in Table 1 demonstrate that moral challenges in Muslim digital discourse are platform-sensitive rather than uniform. Twitter (X) is characterized by political and theological debates marked by polarization and hostility, indicating deficits in *adab* and justice in digitally mediated argumentation. In contrast, Instagram reflects performative piety and the commodification of religiosity, where ethical disruption is more closely tied to sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*) and moral integrity than to discursive conflict.

Table 1 further shows that YouTube-based religious discourse is prone to epistemic simplification, highlighting the relevance of epistemic justice (*ʿadl epistemik*) in addressing distorted knowledge production. TikTok, by comparison, exhibits an ethical configuration in which viral moral messaging generates empathy-driven engagement, positioning *raḥmah* and digital empathy as more salient ethical resources than rational deliberation alone. Taken together, these patterns illustrate that Islamic humanism operates not as a singular moral prescription but as a differentiated ethical framework that aligns specific ethical principles with the communicative logic of each platform, thereby reanchoring digital interaction in moral awareness and spiritual accountability.

Ethical Reconstruction and the Moral Grammar of Digital Life

At the ethical core of Islamic humanism lies the concept of *adab*, which transcends politeness to encompass moral discipline, intellectual humility, and a sustained consciousness of responsibility before God and society (Bhat, 2024; Fauzan & Asrori, 2025). In digitally mediated spaces, where impulsivity and emotional escalation often displace deliberation, *adab* acquires renewed normative relevance. The erosion of face-to-face accountability in online communication frequently facilitates hostility, misinformation, and dehumanizing speech (Bennett, 2022). To clarify how this ethical disruption is addressed within the proposed framework, Figure 1 functions as a normative framework illustration rather than an empirical model, visually synthesizing the ethical architecture of digital Islamic humanism as reconstructed through interpretive analysis.

Figure 1. Normative Framework Illustration of Digital Islamic Humanism

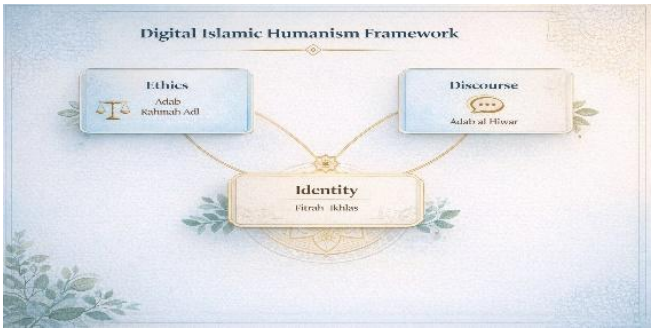

Figure 1 visually articulates the ethical architecture of digital Islamic humanism by positioning *adab* as a central normative axis that mediates between identity formation and discursive practice. Within the framework, ethical conduct is not treated as a peripheral virtue but as a foundational element structurally connected to identity through *fitrah* and *ikhlas*, and to communicative practice through *adab al-ḥiwār*. This visual configuration reinforces the argument that ethical breakdowns in digital spaces are not merely behavioral anomalies but reflect deeper disconnections between moral intention, self-representation, and modes of discourse.

Empirical patterns further substantiate this structural reading. As summarized in Table 1, interactions on Twitter (X) are frequently characterized by moral polarization and verbal hostility in political and theological debates, indicating the erosion of *adab* in dialogical engagement. Read through the lens of Figure 1, such polarization reflects the weakening of ethical mediation between discourse and moral accountability. The findings therefore suggest that rearticulating *adab* as a digital ethical disposition oriented

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toward restraint, *ikhlas*, and moral integrity is essential for restoring ethical balance in online communication.

Closely related to *adab* is *raḥmah*, understood as compassion extended toward all humanity. Within the digital public sphere, *raḥmah* functions as an ethical response to polarization, cancel culture, and moral exhibitionism. It manifests as digital empathy, defined as the capacity to listen attentively, to disagree respectfully, and to engage difference without hostility (Seaman, 2021; Powell, 2024). Grounded in *maqāṣid al-sharīʿa*, particularly the protection of human dignity (*karāmah*) and human intellect (*ʿaql*), *raḥmah* transforms digital spaces from arenas of antagonism into sites of moral encounter and reconciliation (Bulut, 2025).

The ethical function of *raḥmah* is empirically visible in TikTok-based interactions, as reflected in Table 1, where viral moral messaging is frequently accompanied by empathetic and affective forms of participation. When interpreted through the framework in Figure 1, this pattern demonstrates that compassion operates as an ethically productive force when affective engagement remains anchored in moral awareness rather than devolving into emotional spectacle.

The third ethical pillar, *ʿadl*, anchors digital interaction in justice and truthfulness. In digital contexts, justice extends beyond legal considerations to encompass equitable representation, epistemic responsibility, and accountability in the circulation of information (Land & Aronson, 2020; Pang et al., 2024). Upholding *ʿadl* requires resisting misinformation, safeguarding privacy, and critically engaging algorithmic mechanisms that privilege sensationalism over accuracy.

The relevance of *ʿadl* is particularly evident in YouTube-based religious discourse, where simplified theological narratives risk producing epistemic injustice. As indicated in Table 1, Islamic humanism responds to this challenge through the principle of *ʿadl epistemik*, emphasizing fairness in knowledge production and dissemination. Within the integrated structure presented in Figure 1, epistemic justice functions as the ethical link that aligns discourse with both moral intention and social responsibility. Through this triadic moral grammar of *adab*, *raḥmah*, and *ʿadl*, Islamic humanism offers a coherent normative structure for restoring ethical accountability in digital engagement (Putra, 2025). When internalized, these values cultivate digital *taqwā*, a form of moral consciousness that frames every communicative act as ethically meaningful before God (Mareta & Lorenzo, 2025).

Nevertheless, the study identifies persistent tensions between sincerity and performance in digital religious expression. Digital culture frequently rewards visibility over virtue and spectacle over ethical coherence (Vallor, 2021). This tension underscores the need to transform not only individual behavior but also the cultural logic of digital platforms through an Islamic humanist moral imagination that integrates spiritual depth with technological literacy (Fernando, 2024).

Discourse Ethics and Digital Civility

A second major finding concerns the ethical transformation of discourse in the digital public sphere. While Habermas's model of rational critical debate remains influential, its application to algorithmically mediated and religiously infused communicative spaces reveals significant limitations. Digital publics are increasingly fragmented and emotionally driven, producing what Papacharissi (2015) conceptualizes as affective publics. Within Muslim digital environments, discourse is inseparable from religious identity, moral authority, and communal belonging (Gherlone, 2025). To clarify how these dynamics generate ethical tensions in everyday digital interaction, Figure 2 serves as an analytical visualization of discursive contestation within Muslim digital communication rather than a representation of empirical frequency or distribution.

Figure 2. Conceptual Illustration of Ethical Tensions in Muslim Digital Discourse

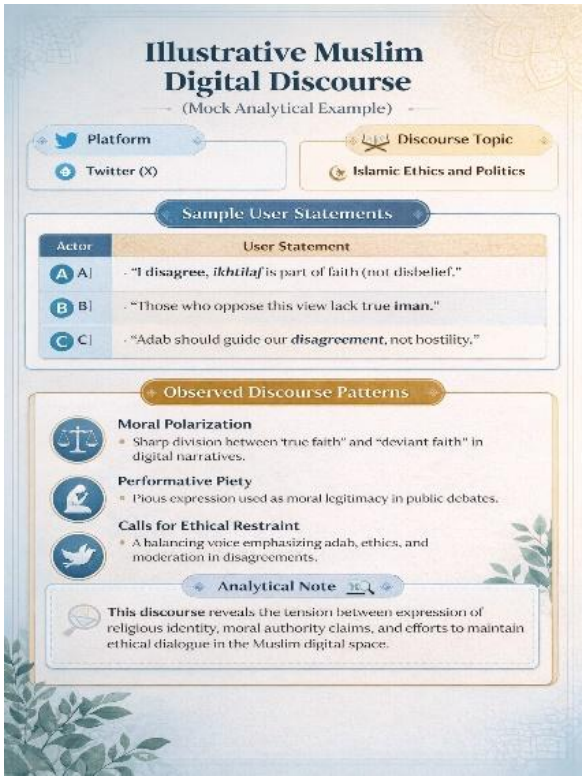

Figure 2 visually captures the ethical tension inherent in Muslim digital communication, where performative piety and moral signaling coexist with explicit calls for ethical restraint and dialogical responsibility. The figure illustrates how digital platforms simultaneously enable religious expression and intensify pressures toward visibility, simplification, and affective alignment. Within this configuration, practices of online *dawah*, while often motivated by sincere ethical intentions, may become shaped by metrics of popularity, virality, and algorithmic amplification rather than sustained moral commitment. The visual juxtaposition in Figure 2 thus reinforces the argument that ethical disruption in digital discourse is structurally produced, not merely the result of individual moral failure.

Against this backdrop, Islamic humanism reframes communication as a moral and spiritual practice rather than a purely instrumental exchange of ideas (Sajoo, 1995; Ibrahim, 2012; Piraino, 2022). The Qur'anic injunction to speak kindly to mankind situates speech as an extension of moral character, while the Prophetic model of communication emphasizes gentleness, patience, and respect for difference. When guided by *adab* and *raḥmah*, digital communication assumes the character of *ibādah*, aligning civic participation with spiritual intention and ethical accountability.

Observations of Muslim digital discourse further reveal that ethical breakdowns frequently stem from the erosion of dialogical humility. Discussions surrounding theology, politics, and gender often devolve into antagonism, signaling a departure from *adab al-ḥiwār* or the ethics of dialogue. Read alongside Figure 2, such

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antagonism reflects a discursive environment in which moral expression is decoupled from ethical self-restraint. Islamic humanism counters this tendency by affirming *ḥikmah* or wisdom and *ikhtilāf* or principled difference as sources of moral enrichment rather than division. Restoring ethical dialogue fosters what may be described as a virtuous public sphere, where discourse functions as collective moral education rather than symbolic contestation (Moyo, 2020; Conwill, 2024).

This ethical reorientation also challenges the secular assumption that religion must be excluded from public discourse. In Muslim contexts, moral and theological reasoning constitutes an integral dimension of civic life. Reimagining the digital public sphere through Islamic humanism therefore involves integrating transcendent rationality, a mode of reasoning that situates public deliberation within divine accountability (Ahmad et al., 2025; Situmorang, 2025). Such integration enriches discourse with ethical depth while avoiding doctrinal imposition or coercive uniformity.

Structural constraints, however, remain significant. Algorithmic incentives that reward controversy, outrage, and emotional intensity systematically undermine reflective dialogue and ethical moderation (Ruckenstein, 2023; Metzler & Garcia, 2024). Consequently, ethical reform cannot be confined to personal virtue alone but must extend to questions of structural justice. Advocating algorithmic transparency, equitable moderation practices, and humane digital design represents an extension of *ʿadl* within the governance of digital communication technologies.

Identity, Representation, and Digital Islamic Humanism

The third analytical domain concerns identity and representation in digital spaces shaped by visibility, surveillance, and ideological contestation. Digital platforms simultaneously enable religious self-expression while intensifying fragmentation, comparison, and moral tension (Zhakin, 2025). From the perspective of Islamic anthropology, human identity is grounded in *fitrah*, an innate disposition toward truth, moral awareness, and spiritual responsibility (Rassool, 2024). This ontological understanding stands in contrast to the performative digital self, which is increasingly shaped by metrics of validation such as likes, shares, and followers, thereby generating a persistent crisis of authenticity and self-alienation (Taylor, 2022). To clarify how these identity tensions are structured and reproduced across different digital platforms, the study visualizes the interaction between technological architecture, ethical vulnerability, and Islamic humanist response in Figure 3. Rather than representing empirical distributions, Figure 3 offers a conceptual synthesis of platform-specific ethical vulnerabilities and corresponding Islamic humanist responses, integrating the analytical typologies outlined in Table 1.

Figure 3. Conceptual Mapping of Islamic Digital Humanism across Social Media Platforms

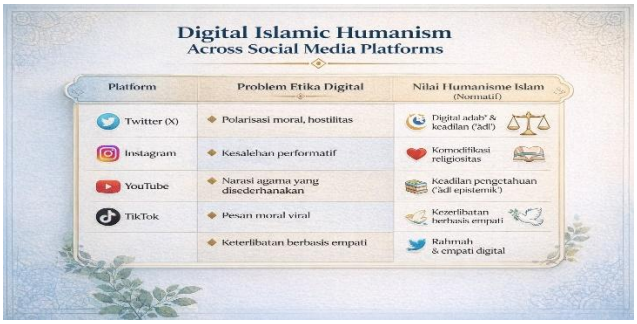

Figure 3 synthesizes the platform-specific patterns identified in Table 1 by illustrating how distinct social media architectures generate differentiated ethical vulnerabilities and corresponding Islamic humanist responses. Rather than presenting Islamic ethics as a monolithic moral code, the figure demonstrates that digital Islamic humanism operates as a context-sensitive ethical framework. The principles of *adab*, *raḥmah*, and *ʿadl* are shown to adapt dynamically to the communicative logic of each platform, responding to polarization on Twitter (X), performative religiosity on Instagram, epistemic simplification on YouTube, and affect-driven engagement on TikTok. In this sense, Figure 3 visually reinforces the argument that ethical disruption and moral renewal in digital spaces are structurally conditioned rather than universally uniform.

Within this configuration, Islamic humanism offers a corrective by grounding digital identity in *ikhlāṣ* or sincerity and moral integrity, defined by the alignment between intention (*niyyah*) and action (*ʿamal*) (Shodiqoh, 2024; Siregar et al., 2025). At the collective level, Muslim digital networks reflect the decentralized public sphere described by Eickelman and Anderson (2003), characterized by plural interpretations, dispersed authority, and fluid boundaries of religious influence. While such pluralism fosters creativity and accessibility, it simultaneously risks fragmentation and polarization. Islamic humanism mediates these tensions by affirming *ikhtilāf* as divinely meaningful diversity rather than deviation or threat (Monia, 2023).

The study further identifies ethical hybridity among younger Muslims who integrate faith, activism, and creativity within digital engagement. Initiatives addressing environmental justice, mental health awareness, and humanitarian causes exemplify digital Islamic humanism in practice, where ethical commitment intersects with contemporary social concerns (Karimullah, 2024; Sajir, 2025). However, as illustrated conceptually in Figure 3, the commodification of piety within attention-driven economies risks transforming devotion into spectacle, where religious expression is evaluated through visibility rather than sincerity (Echchaibi & Hoover, 2023; Luthfia & Yanuri, 2024; Promey, 2024). Islamic humanism responds to this condition by foregrounding *murāqabah* or spiritual self-awareness as an internal ethical safeguard against performative religiosity and moral exhibitionism (Bhat, 2024).

Synthesizing these findings, the study advances a three-dimensional framework of digital Islamic humanism that integrates ethics, discourse, and identity as interdependent dimensions of moral renewal. As visually consolidated across Figures 1–3 and empirically grounded in Table 1, this framework positions Islamic humanism as both a normative compass and a transformative project that bridges individual virtue with structural reform (Zhanbayev et al., 2023; Firnando, 2024; Piraino, 2023; Koulu, 2021). Beyond Muslim societies, this model contributes a universal ethical vision grounded in dignity, compassion, and justice, offering a holistic response to digital polarization and moral fatigue (Shaukat, 2024). Reimagined in this way, Islamic humanism emerges not as nostalgic preservation but as ethical innovation oriented toward a humane digital civilization.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Islamic humanism constitutes a coherent normative framework for addressing ethical, social, and spiritual challenges in the digital public sphere. Grounded in *tawḥīd*, *adab*, *raḥmah*, and *ʿadl*, it reframes digital communication

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as a morally consequential practice guided by digital *taqwā*, emphasizing responsibility, empathy, and human dignity. The article contributes theoretically by positioning Islamic humanism as a form of normative digital ethics that extends public sphere theory beyond its predominantly secular and Western foundations.

The findings also carry implications for digital policy and governance, suggesting that platform regulation and digital literacy initiatives can benefit from ethical principles that foreground moral accountability and justice rather than procedural compliance alone. Future research should empirically examine how Islamic humanist ethics are enacted across digital platforms and explore comparative dialogue with other ethical traditions in digital ethics. Such inquiry can further illuminate the role of non-Western moral paradigms in shaping more humane, pluralistic, and dialogical digital public life.

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